



## Is Denominationalism a Viable Christian System-2

Last week we noted the charge of "cult" that denominationalism levels at those who claim to be New Testament Christians today. One of the additional reasons this charge is leveled against us is that to the denominational world, it is unthinkable that the church of Christ (the church that belongs to Christ) would be one small group out of the millions of adherents to denominational philosophy. The proponents of denominationalism may confess that there is a "church of Christ," but that it is far more broad and diverse than we believe it to be. In fact, they argue, that the "church of Christ" is merely the great body of believers throughout the world composed of the various denominations worldwide. In essence, they claim, anyone who believes in Jesus as their Savior is a member of the "church of Christ" regardless of what particular denomination they are a member. To disagree with this concept relegating the contester to the status of "intolerant" and "uncharitable" of other's peculiar beliefs and practices. They ask, "how could one be truly loving of another by saying that they are wrong and need to repent?" Of course, Jesus was loving, but He demanded repentance out of those He dealt with (Matthew 3:2; Matthew 4:17).

Somewhere in this mix, it will be pointed out that we all believe in the same Jesus and that this is the only uniting bond that we need respect when it comes to unity within the Christian world. Passages such as 1 John 5:1, ("Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God...") and John 3:16 are bandied about in an effort to "prove" that mere faith in Jesus (without any sort of God-work on the part of the believer) is all that is necessary to be part of the one great "body of Christ" and that this tenet of faith alone is enough to unite all believers. Such thought fails to take into account the words of Jesus in John 17:21-23, the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 and especially Ephesians 4:1-5 where Paul lists at least seven uniting principles upon which Christians MUST agree, one of which is baptism. There is more to

Christian unity than mere mental acknowledgment of Jesus as the Christ. It is due to the purposeful overlooking of this one key and vital fact that denominationalism cannot see the division that it is in reality fostering upon its adherents.

Denominationalism is not a viable Christian system because it promotes divisions instead of unity. One of the primary accusations leveled against churches of Christ is that they are divisive. Those who make such an accusation say we are divisive because we demand that everyone else come out of denominationalism and unite upon God's word instead of being tolerant of the (truly divisive) creeds and church disciplines of the denominational world. They claim that because we do not accept the same standard of salvation as the denominational world, that we are being divisive. What is truly amazing is that those who are part of denominationalism fail to realize the divisions that already exist among them. One denomination is named the Methodists, another, the Lutherans, yet another Presbyterian, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc. The names themselves are divisive. Paul told the church at Corinth that such division was sinful (1 Corinthians 1:10-13). However, this is not the only area of divisions. Ask a Methodist about baptism and see what they say. Turn around and ask a Baptist and see what they say. You will find two completely different answers given. Yet we are supposed to believe that you may "go to the church of your choice" and that will be "ok" with God? How can God be "ok" with such divisions in teaching regarding a very important subject? A subject important enough for Paul to include in Ephesians 4:1-5 as a fundamental principle of Christian unity? Jesus prayed for unity among believers, but not the unity that the denominational world espouses. Jesus prayed for complete and total unity as He and the Father were united (John 17:21-23). Can a supposedly Christian system be valid and viable when it ignores obvious divisions and even promotes and encourages them among "the saved?" It cannot.

(To be continued, KC)

# Clothed and In His Right Mind

These are the words of Luke 8:35 regarding the man who formerly "for a long time...had worn no clothes" (Luke 8:27). To any and all who have any degree of discernment it is painfully obvious that our nation, yea the world, has the on-going and growing problem of not knowing nor caring about what is descent and proper in the moral realm of virtue and modesty. It is therefore again timely that such a lesson on modesty be forthcoming. The apostle Peter who wrote, "Wherefore I shall be ready always to put you in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and are established in the truth which is with you. And I think it right, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance" (2 Peter 1:12-13). What disappoints this writer are the questions that Christians (who ought to know better) ask such as "Well, what is modest? What does society say? Did God ever tell us how long is long'?" It is my observation that the majority of those who ask such questions are those who are bent on trying to justify their behavior and dress code which their common sense is really trying to tell them is contrary to God's standards. So long as Christians still ask such questions, it will continue to be necessary for us to address and teach what God says about these things.

When we speak of modesty, we speak of that which is "moral, of virtue and integrity." Generally speaking, we mean behavior and dress which speaks of an "attitude of meekness, shyness and goodness before God

and men." Immodest dress does not just mean various degrees of undress, but also any kind of clothing which draws attention to body parts...to the point of causing impure thoughts in the minds of others. This is where some people will say, "Well, we can't help what some people think!" To some degree, this is true. But we certainly ought to recognize that we contribute to what people think, and we do that many times by means of our appearance. Simply put, clothes that are too tight, too low-cut, too highly-hemmed or too thin are immodest. Clothing speaks to everyone. We would call this making a "fashion statement."

Brother, sister, your clothes are professing something about you (Genesis 38:19; Proverbs 7:10; 1 Timothy 2:10). It is sad that Christians who are to be the light to this world would rebel at teaching which demands modesty. People are influenced by how we dress! There are kinds of clothing that are appropriate in some places and situations, but not in others. What one wears to bed is not likely to be fitting for the picnic grounds. What one would wear to play some ball with the kids is probably not proper for the worship assembly. Some have opted to compromise with the world's standard of decency by wearing sweat clothes for nearly any and every occasion. I still cannot figure why Christians will dress "appropriately" with a suit, tie, nice clean shoes, and conservative, respectful dresses when attending the memorial service of a friend or

loved one who has passed from this life, but "dress down" in jeans, tennis shoes and T-shirts for the memorial of our Lord's death on the first day of the week.

Sadly, too many have concluded that when engaged in a sport, there is no immodesty when one dresses in the outfit that someone has deemed as "the" outfit to be worn for that sport. There is nothing sinful about swimming. But what one wears to swim, where one swims and with whom one swims are indeed matters of modesty. When engaged in with those undressed, of the opposite sex and in public or private settings, it is a sinful situation. There are those who try to justify their daughters' being involved in cheer-leading when they flip and flaunt "all they have" before the eyes of the fans in the stands. How much "leg" does the Lord think is appropriate for others to see? Why else do people pay attention to the cheerleaders? Have you ever seen male cheerleaders? I have. You know that they are not dressed as the girls. Why? It is just as sinful for a man to be showing his legs and thighs (his nakedness and shame) as it is for a woman. More than ever before perhaps, is it important for men to guard their modesty because of the gross explosion of homosexuals who have "come out of the closet" and the increase of homosexuality and male rape.

Just what is "modest?" By definition it means "to observe proprieties of sex; chaste; descent and unassuming; moral and pure." What saith the scrip-

## Sermons and Study Topics

Week of 4/25/04

Morning .....	The Extreme Jesus
Scripture .....	Philippians 3:7-11
Evening .....	Why Was the church of Christ Established?
Scripture .....	Ephesians 3:8-11
Sunday Morning Bible Study .....	The Book of Hebrews
Wednesday Evening Bible Study .....	How To Study the Bible

## Weekly Record

Week of 4/18/04

Sunday Class .....	67
Sunday A.M. ....	78
Sunday P.M. ....	53
Wednesday .....	55
Contribution.....	\$1314.30
Budget .....	\$1778.13

## “Clothed,” cont.

tures? The whole point is to remind the readers what God has said about these things. Do the Scriptures address these things specifically? Are there Biblical guidelines that we can use to determine what kind of clothes to wear and how long they must be or short they may be? Yes, God tells us "how long is long." He, being the author of modesty, ought to be able to tell us. In the third chapter of Genesis, we are told of the introduction of sin into this world, the blame that was passed and the record of the beginning of God's remedy for this sin. We read, "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons (Genesis 3:7)...And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself (Genesis 3:10) ... And Jehovah God made for Adam and for his wife coats of skins, and clothed them" (Genesis 3:21). Note

that Adam and Eve knew they were naked and needed covering. This covering or "apron" was a loincloth, like a belt or sash. By the description, it seems to have covered more than many bikini bottoms. But then we see that, although they had already covered themselves, they still considered themselves naked, thus they hid from God. This situation is then contrasted with what God provided for them, namely: "coats of skins." These "coats" were like robes that hung from the shoulder and covered the body, past the thigh and to the calf. What did God do with these coats? He "clothed" the man and his wife. This Hebrew word means "to wrap around; to put on a garment." This then is what God would call being "clothed." Anything less is classed by this text as "naked." Consider how God describes "nakedness and shame" (Isaiah 47:2-3). The uncovering of the leg and thigh are regarded as nakedness and shame. God has set the

standard for being clothed and covered. It ought to be clear that tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti strapped garments, shoulder-less gowns (of any kind), low slung muscle shirts, shorts and mini-anythings are not proper "clothing" and therefore not modest. From what we learn in the Old Testament, God did not want people to see His priests' legs and thighs (their nakedness).

We know that much of what we find in these Old Testament things are foreshadows and types of what God will accomplish in Christ and His church. The priesthood answers to the priesthood of believers today (1 Peter 2:5,9). Obviously, God wants His priests to be clothed and their nakedness covered. Virtue or worthiness describes a person, male or female, who has the character of substance and power to stand against the pressures of society when it comes to morals and modesty. The opposite of this trait is found in the attitude of God's people as addressed by Jeremiah, "Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush" (Jeremiah 6:15). Many of our brethren ought to be ashamed of themselves and how they dress, whether for the world or worship. When in public, they ought to be embarrassed and blush! Let us keep our right minds and our clothes on!

Robin Haley

## Kevin's Korner



Once again this past week we have had great reason to rejoice. Last Sunday evening, Joey Luczak was baptized into Christ after studying with the Wiley family. We are so happy that he is now a member of our family here at Berryville. Welcome Joey!

To update your directories, please note the following address information for the Wiley family:

215 Bunch St.  
Berryville AR 72616

Our Friends and Family Day is coming up soon! We are less than two months away from that day now, as well as our yearly Vacation Bible School. Both events will be on the weekend of June 12th and 13th. I sure hope that you are inviting and making your plans to be here on

those two days. There are new flyers in the foyer to help you in these efforts.

We are saddened at the loss of our sister in Christ, Mary Patterson. Mary passed from this life to the next this past Wednesday. Her body was cremated and her ashes interred at Forest Hill in Kansas City. We visited with Mary on occasion and she was always a lovely host. Mary could not get out of the house much during the last few years of her life due to her weakened condition. We will miss visiting with Mary, but we know that we will be reunited one day with her in the resurrection. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family at this time.

*"...and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:17b, 18).*

### Elders:

Clay Bozarth, Leon Duncan,  
Bruce Foster, Bill Fort, Glenn  
Quigley

### Deacons:

Ken Smith, Brent Stevens,  
Rusty Windle.

### Preacher:

Kevin Cauley... 870-423-6707

# News, Notes, and 'Nouncements

- We are truly thankful to God for the wonderful new Lord's day that he has given us today to worship him in Spirit and in Truth!
- Let us remain constant in prayer for the following individuals: Geneva Atchley, Lucille Fort, Glenn Quigley, Michael and Carrie Rawls (friend of Susan Elliott whose husband is stationed in Iraq).
- Please remember our shut ins: Curtis and Opal Hull, Edith Mischler, Art Roberts.
- Our youth devotional is tonight! It will be held and Rusty and Tiffany's house, care of Rusty's house cleaning service. Please bring chips and drinks and desserts.
- We will have a VBS planning meeting prior to the beginning of our 6:00 worship service this afternoon. All participants are requested to attend.
- Be inviting, be inviting, be inviting your friends and family to our special day for them, Sunday, June 13th, 2004!
- Please pick up one of the VBS/ Friends and Family day flyers in the back to aid in your invitation efforts.
- The regularly scheduled elders and deacons meeting will be next Sunday evening after evening services. If you have any items for discussion please see one of these men.
- The ladies day has been placed into "wait and see" mode until such a time as Lucille recovers from her back problems.
- There is a gospel meeting in Cassville, starting May 2nd and continuing through to May 6th.
- Monthly Assignments for May are: Ken Smith, Announcements; Bruce Foster, Worship Coordinator; Pat and Trish Foster, Prepare Communion; Leon and Ray Duncan, Carry Communion.
- The pantry item for this week is Tomato Paste.

## Welcome!

To the Berryville church of Christ.

### Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:..... 9:30 AM  
 Sunday Morning Worship: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Sunday Evening Worship: ..... 6:00 PM  
 Ladies Bible Class: ..... 10:30 AM  
 Wed. Evening Bible Class: ..... 7:00 PM

### Serving Each Other

	April 25th, 2004	May 2nd, 2004
<b>Sunday Morning</b>		
Songs:	Brent Stevens	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dan Hand	Glenn Williams
Scripture Reading:	Matt Bassing	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
(assist)	Rusty Windle	Rusty Windle
	Bob Moore	Hugh Atchley
	Sandy Nieves	Jerry Roller
Closing Prayer	Glenn Quigley	Bill Fort
<b>Sunday Evening</b>		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Larry Elliott
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Glenn Williams	Dale Pinkley
Scripture Reading:	Dan Hand	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Leon Duncan
	Clay Bozarth	Brandon Foster
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Bruce Foster
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Glenn Quigley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Bob Moore
Invitation:	Matt Bassing	Bill Fort
Closing Prayer:	Sandy Nieves	Clay Bozarth

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